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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to determine patterns of relationships between the philosophical views and learner-centered instructional attitudes of teachers in 10 public high schools of a large southeastern urban school system. Two attitudinal scales, the Brief Scale I from Kerlinger's Education Attitude Scale 7 and the Instruction Subscale from the McREL School Practices Survey, were utilized. The sample of 435 teachers indicated their opinions on philosophical views and learner-centered instruction during scheduled faculty meetings. There was considerable heterogeneity in teachers' philosophical attitudes and their degree of acceptance of learner-centeredness within schools. An item analysis of the philosophical and learner-centered scales produced weak positive correlations. The progressive philosophical items correlated more strongly with the learner-centered items than did the traditional philosophical items. Teachers may have expressed traditional philosophical attitudes while espousing learner-centered attitudes because they felt ambivalent about both traditional and progressive views. What appeared to be incongruent may have been an expression of moderation. Or, the demands of the teaching environments were such that teachers' progressive beliefs were swamped in favor of traditional beliefs. Appendices include data from Kerlinger's Education Attitudes Scale 7 and the School Practices Survey. (Contains 66 references.) (Author/ND)

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RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHIES AND ATTITUDES TOWARD LEARNER-CENTERED INSTRUCTION

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Relationships Between Educational Philosophies and
Attitudes Toward Learner-Centered Instruction

Patricia A. Williams

The primary purpose of this study was to determine patterns of relationships between the philosophical views and learner-centered instructional attitudes of teachers in 10 public high schools of a large southeastern urban school system. Two attitudinal scales, the Brief Scale I from Kerlinger's Education Attitude Scale VII and the Instruction Subscale from the McREL School Practices Survey, were utilized. The sample of 435 teachers indicated their opinions on philosophical views and learner-centered instruction during scheduled faculty meetings.

There was considerable heterogeneity about teachers' philosophical attitudes and their degree of acceptance of learner-centeredness within schools. An item analysis of the philosophical and learner-centered scales produced weak positive correlations. The progressive philosophical items correlated more strongly with the learner-centered items than did the traditional philosophical items.

Teachers may have expressed traditional philosophical attitudes while espousing learner-centered attitudes because they felt ambivalent about both traditional and progressive views. What appeared to be incongruent may have been an expression of moderation. Or, the demands of the teaching environments were such that teachers' progressive beliefs were swamped in favor of traditional beliefs.

Relationships Between Educational Philosophies and Attitudes

Toward Learner-Centered Instruction

Statement of the Problem

Teachers' philosophical views, whether implicitly or explicitly held, may be at odds with their attitudes towards learner-centered instruction. A relationship may exist between philosophical views and attitudes toward instruction. Attitudes toward learner-centered instruction and teacher-centered instruction may be a function of philosophical views. There is little research that offers solutions to this problem.

There is a presumption that teachers who hold progressive philosophical views favor learner-centered instruction, and that traditionally disposed teachers favor teacher-centered instruction. Some teachers may not be aware of their philosophical views and how these views may impact their instructional outlooks. The assumption is that when teachers gain an understanding of the educational philosophy they initially purport, they are in a beginning position to alter that position. There is a theory, as developed by Cantor (1953), that teachers can alter their teaching behavior on a predictable basis. The problem with the traditional philosophical view is that it does not encompass an understanding of the needed changes in how teachers interact with students. These changes in teacher-student interaction are grounded in an understanding of how students learn as framed in the progressive philosophical view. The prevailing philosophical view of traditionalism has failed to meet current educational needs of students. Glaser (1988) posits that a stronger theoretical base is needed if a far broader range of students are to be taught and taken farther than ever before as modern society demands.

Given the increasing number of disruptive students in classrooms, many teachers would place precedence on strategies for maintaining order in the classroom, teaching strategies would be considered secondarily. John Goodlad (1984) stated this strategy as follows:

> My interpretation is that teachers, aware of the rather crowded box in which they and their students live each day, see the need to be in control, to prevent unruly students from dominating, as a necessary condition for student learning--even though they might prefer simply to act on their beliefs about good pedagogy...A class out of control is not a class engaged in academic learning. (p. 175)

Dewey (1938) understood the need for the "necessity of personal commands of the teacher" because "the situation almost forced it upon the teacher" and the "normal, proper conditions of control were lacking and had to be made up for, by the direct intervention of the teacher" (p. 55). Dewey's (1938) understanding of the "hard to reach" (McCombs, 1994a) student was evident by his statement

> There are likely to be some who, when they come to school, are already victims of injurious conditions outside of the school and who have become so passive and unduly docile that they fail to contribute. There will be others who, because of previous experience, are bumptious and unruly and perhaps downright rebellious. But it is certain that the general principle of social control cannot be predicted upon such cases. It is also true that no general rule can be laid down for dealing with such cases. The teacher has to deal with them individually. The educator . . . cannot . . . allow the unruly and non-participating pupils to stand permanently in the way of the educative activities of others. Exclusion perhaps is the only available measure at a given juncture, but it is no solution. For it may strengthen the very causes which brought about the undesirable anti-social attitude, such as desire for attention or to show off. (pp. 56-57)

Though there is considerable professional and popular concern about children who fail to learn (Ehrlich, 1991; Goodlad, 1984; Holt, 1988; Kohl, 1988; Kozol, 1991), efforts to decrease school failure have not kept pace with the rising number of students who exhibit academic and emotional problems (National Center for Education Statistics, 1990; U.S. Department of Education, 1988). These students are considered "hard to reach" and indicate a need for more personal, one-to-one interaction with their teachers. In the Metropolitan Life Survey (Harris, 1994) of the 2,500 students interviewed, 44% have had personal experiences with angry scenes or confrontations and 24% had had physical fights. Those students who report being assaulted or being threatened by classmates, either on or off school grounds, are most likely to report a lack of one-to-one interaction with teachers (Harris, 1994). Thirty-one percent of students believed they had received personal attention from a teacher only a few times or hardly ever, and those most at risk of becoming victims of violence were the more likely to feel that way. The Harris (1994) study reported that students who have experienced violence are more often critical of their schools and of relations with teachers and other students. Such students are more likely to state that their parents have infrequent contact with school. Their parents have the mistaken view that students get personal attention from teachers.

Research on at-risk students' perspectives of their life within a school setting offers critical information. Without their perspectives, what will work for them is an unknown and programs designed for them fail. According to a study (Reid, 1983) of persistent school absentees from schools in an economically depressed area, these students blamed the schools they had attended for their lack of academic achievement rather than the psychological and social factors of their behavior. Research in the area of instructional methods with strong motivational components is needed (Schiefele, Krapp, & Winæler, 1992). Many secondary students appear to be unmotivated by the standard instructional methods and practices.

Some students fail in school though they experience positive educational experiences from the best and most creative teachers. Many of these students have experienced insufficient parental

guidance, health services, nutrition, safe neighborhoods, housing and social service systems (Stallings, 1995) and seemingly are unable to avail themselves of available educational opportunities.

Students' Voices

Notable studies of students' voicing their experience in schools (Hayes, Ryan, & Zsellar, 1994; McLaughlin, 1994; Nieto, 1994, Poplin & Weeres, 1992) reveal the common message that, for students, the quality of human relationships with which they engage is inherently motivational and important to the value they attach to their schooling. In McLaughlin's study (1994), students stated a sense of being visible as crucial for their continuing interest in school. An illustration of this is the phrasing of one student: "The way teachers treat you as a student or as a person actually" (p. 10) as counting more than any other factor in the school setting in determining their commitment to the school's goals, and how they imagined their academic future.

Need for New Learning Environments

What appears to be needed are new learning environments. One school of thought proposes that knowledge of philosophical position is the beginning point in decision making for change and serves as the basis for all subsequent decisions (Goodlad, 1979). Many conventional instructional methods are either teacher-centered or content-centered and would be considered philosophically traditional. Teacher-centered instruction results in a learning environment managed by a directive teacher and is generally considered to contain principles opposite those of learner-centered instruction. The teacher sets the structural framework for prescribed teaching lessons, curtails student-to-student dialogue, and promotes verbal interaction between himself or herself and the individual student (Bany & Johnson, 1975). A content-centered program consists of the delivery and evaluation of instruction dictated by the structure of the content. Teachers' emphasis on subject matter is most aptly phrased in the teacher's conception that the student must master the course content (Wehling & Charters, Jr., 1969). A philosophically progressive view (Dewey, 1902) allows for both the delivery of instruction and the content to be important elements in a

learner-centered program, but are considered only "within the context of the perspective of each learner" (Crowell & Alford, 1995, p. 4). Research in cognition and social learning over the past 15 or 20 years has given rise to a new understanding of learning which places the learner at the center of our educational programs (Crowell & Alford, 1995; Erickson, 1982; Erickson & Shultz, 1981).

Learner-Centered Instruction

A method of instruction that may prove to be effective with youth is that of learner-centered instruction. The philosophical foundation of learner-centered instruction is that of John Dewey's progressive educational philosophy (Dewey, 1902; 1913; 1916; 1938). The research base that supports it is based on the understanding that learning is a process internal to the learner (Wertsch, 1991) and successful learning is best achieved in an environment which involves authentic tasks, provides opportunities to collaborate, and requires students to use the information acquired (Alexander & Murphy, 1994; Crowell & Alford, 1995). Within a classroom incorporating learner-centered instruction, a culture is developed that is responsive to both individual learner considerations and what is known to be best for all learners (Oldfather, 1994). This approach balances concerns for learner needs and subject content that defines educated and productive citizens.

Different educational philosophies are evinced in distinct classroom behaviors. Effective teachers demonstrate consistency between their educational philosophies and practice (Clarkson, 1983; Clandinin, 1986; Hart, 1990). Elbaz (1983) adopted the term "personal practical knowledge" for the experimental and philosophical understanding that teachers gain throughout their personal and career history, and which becomes a partial basis of their practice. To consider philosophy with respect to teaching is to focus upon the concepts used in teaching and on the assumptions underlying research (Scheffler, 1967). For instance, though teaching is an intentional act, it cannot be equated with learning, as stated in the following.

> educational learning typically takes place in conjunction with teaching,...it may occur apart from teaching. When it occurs with teaching, it follows directly, we have suggested, not from any action of the teacher, but from some action by the learners. (Heslep, 1989, p. 132)

Regardless of the philosophical platform upon which a teacher might practice, the student may or may not achieve learning. In classrooms based on philosophical progressivism, students have the experiences of talking as much or more than the teacher, working individually or in small groups, assuming some responsibility in selecting or organizing the subject matter and creating and enforcing classroom rules and procedures. However, it can be expected that students' actions are usually "shaped — commanded, prompted, elicited, stimulated, or whatever — by some action of the teacher" (Heslep, 1989, p. 132).

The educational climate of today is one of reform and an examination of the philosophical and theoretical instructional base guiding school reform should be conducted. Current efforts at school reform are an attempt to move American education from a highly bureaucratic system of layers of rules and regulations, teacher-proof tests and curricula and administrative directive to another paradigm that is governed by teachers' professional knowledge with an increased focus on the needs of students (Darling-Hammond, 1992). The need for establishing a theoretical base is especially crucial due to the increasing numbers of at-risk students.

The problem is that teachers' philosophical views may be at odds with their attitudes toward learner-centered instruction and thereby inconsistencies in the instructional program result. Teachers' delivery of learner-centered instruction and the degree to which this instruction is supported by their principals may profoundly affect student achievement (Albrecht, DeFleur & Warner, 1972; Corwin & Borman, 1988; Firestone, 1992; Rokeach, 1960). The efficacy of student teacher and teacher relationships are also affected by similar or dissimilar philosophical attitudes (Hill, 1974; Loadman & Mahan, 1987; Wiley, 1972).

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In the selection of new teachers to fill available teaching positions, one criteria for selection might be that they are able to demonstrate, among other capabilities, the ability to generalize between philosophical position and practice (American Teacher, 1992).

The purpose of this study was to determine patterns of relationships between the philosophical views and learner-centered instructional attitudes of teachers in public high schools. It asks: What types of relationships exist among teachers on attitudes toward educational philosophy and learner-centered instruction?

Procedures and Analysis

Research Methodology

This study was conducted to determine if patterns of relationships exist between teachers' responses to philosophical and learner-centered instructional attitudes among schools. Teachers' views of learner-centered instruction may or may not be related to philosophy. However, if teachers can be classified by philosophical groups, perhaps they can be predictably classified in terms of their learner-centered instructional attitudes as well. Scores from the 10-Item Brief Scale from Kerlinger's Education Attitude Scale VII (Appendix A) was compared with scores from a 6-Item Instruction Subscale of the School Practices Survey (Appendix B) developed by the Presidential Task Force on Psychology in Education for the American Psychological Association and the Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory (Mid-continent, 1993).

Research Instruments

10-Item Brief Scale I from Kerlinger's Educational Attitudes Scale ES-VII and the 6-Item Instructional subscale from the McREL School Practices Survey were chosen to determine the teachers' philosophical and learner-centered attitudes.

Kerlinger's Educational Attitudes Scale. The Kerlinger scale assesses progressivism and traditionalism and is a reliable and valid scale (Adwere-Boamah, 1982; Kerlinger, 1958a; Kerlinger & Kaya, 1959a; Kerlinger & Pedhazur, 1968). The dichotomous nature of the

"traditional" and "progressive" referents has been confirmed by factor analysis (Sontag & Pedhazur, 1972).

Due to the amount of time entailed in responding to the 30-Item ES-VII Kerlinger scale, it was shortened by Midgett (1972)(see Appendix A). Five items that correlated highly with progressive beliefs and five items that correlated highly with traditional beliefs were selected by Midgett (1972) and Bledsoe (1976). These 10 items were chosen because 5 items are highly correlated with progressivism and 5 items are highly correlated with traditionalism and there was a high degree of variability between the two sets of 5 items. Within each philosophical view, there is very little variability. In addition to the Factor A (progressivism) and Factor B (traditionalism), Kerlinger (1967a) recommended that the difference between the scores (A-B) be regarded as an index of the degree to which one has a strong philosophical orientation or "crystallization" of beliefs.

Test/re-test reliability of the 10-Item Brief Scale I yielded stability coefficients of .76 and .86, respectively (McIlhargie, 1980). A 4-point Likert scale of "strongly disagree," "disagree," "agree," and "strongly agree" (1 = SD, 2 = D, 3 = A, 4 = SA) was utilized. A philosophical attitudinal score was obtained for each participant by summing the responses for the traditionalist point of view and subtracting it from the sum of the responses for the progressive point of view. The scores could therefore range from 15 (progressive) to -15 (traditionalist). For the purpose of determining a dominant philosophical view, a negative score indicated a traditional point of view and a positive score indicated a progressive point of view. A score of zero indicates a simultaneous progressive and traditional philosophical view.

6-Item Instruction Subscale from the McREL School Practices Survey (1994). The 6-Item Instruction Subscale of the School Practices Survey (see Appendix B) has been validated by McREL (1995). This survey is part of the McREL Learner-Centered Battery (1993). The reliability coefficient for the 6-Item Instruction Subscale is an alpha of .80 (McREL, 1995). The items on the 6-item McREL scale are answered using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1

(strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Mean scores across the 6 items were obtained for each participant. The scores ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree); that is, the sum of the six items' scores was divided by six, the number of items.

Survey Participants

The philosophical and learner-centered attitudinal surveys were administered at scheduled faculty meetings in each of the ten participating high schools. The researcher was on the site of each participating school. The surveys were administered from March 1995 to June 1995. The complete anonymity of all respondents and their school sites was respected. A total sample of 471 teachers was obtained. After data entry, it was determined that a number of teachers did not respond to at least 80% of the items on each of the scales. Due to the large sample size, it was determined that these participants would not be included in the study. Therefore, the sample consisted of 435 teachers.

Presentation of the Findings

Research Subquestion #1: Are there differences in the scores of teachers on the philosophical scale among the ten schools?

H_o1: Teachers' philosophical attitudes will not differ among the schools.

As can be seen from Table 1, the analysis of variance was not significant ($p > .05$).There were no differences among the schools on the philosophical scale. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Insert Table 1 about here

Research Subquestion #2: Are there differences in the scores of teachers on the learner-centered scale among the 10 schools?

H_o2: Teachers' learner-centered attitudes will not differ among the schools.

As can be seen from Table 2, the analysis of variance was not significant ($p > .05$). There were no differences in the scores of teachers on the learner-centered scale among the 10 schools. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Insert Table 2 about here

Research Subquestion #3: Are there any relationships between the teachers' responses on the items on the learner-centered scale and their responses on the items of the philosophical attitudinal scale?

Only those individuals that responded to all 10 Kerlinger items and all 6 McREL items were included in the analysis, thus reducing the n to 431. Due to the rather extensive size of the sample, a large number of Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were significant at the .01 level or less, producing significant but weak positive correlations between items of the philosophical and learner-centered scales. This study found a number of significant, but weak positive correlations between agreement with progressive philosophical attitudes and learner-centered attitudes. In an effort to examine the stronger degrees of associations and given the fairly large number of statistically significant correlations in this correlational matrix, only the larger correlations (i.e. .20 or greater) are discussed (see Table 3).

Insert Table 3 about here

Discussion of the Findings

The discussion of the findings is organized around the major research question "What types of relationships exist between and among teachers on attitudes toward educational philosophy and learner-centered instruction?" with three subsequent subquestions.

Research Subquestion #1

Are there differences in the scores of teachers on the philosophical scale among the 10 schools?

According to the literature, teachers' philosophical attitudes do not differ (Ashton, et al., 1975; Bennett, 1976; Goodlad, 1984; Sontag, 1968). The present study agrees with these findings. The 1975 study by Ashton and his colleagues typified all of the similar studies in that there was no pronounced extremes of progressivism and traditionalism. Unlike the Wiley (1972) study which resulted in a strong agreement with traditional views, this study found no pronounced extremes of progressivism or traditionalism.

Research Subquestion #2

Are there differences in the scores of teachers on the learner-centered scale among the 10 schools?

This study found that teachers' learner-centered attitudes did not vary within the ten schools. This finding was in agreement with the Ashton (1975) study that resulted in a widespread lack of variation in teacher's instructional techniques.

Research Subquestion #3

Are there any relationships between the teachers' responses on the items on the learner-centered scale and their responses on the items of the philosophical attitudinal scale?

Miller (1963) found a positive relationship between subject-centered education and traditional philosophical views and child-centered education and progressive philosophical views. Results of the present study agree with these findings. Although the Miller study did not utilize the same learner-centered scale as used in this study, some comparison between the two studies can be made. The present study and the Miller study were in agreement in finding a weak positive correlation, between progressive philosophical scales and learner-centered instruction.

The present study found this same endorsement through a weak positive correlation between items of the traditional philosophical scales and learner-centered instruction scales, indicating a simultaneous endorsement of both philosophies. In this study, all of the six learner-centered items (L1 - L6) yielded some correlations in the range of .20 - .31 with the progressive philosophical items, as indicated in Table 11.

Learner-centered item L1

> Instructional practices that provide multiple ways of presenting information (e.g., auditory, visual, and kinesthetic).

Learner-centered item L1 correlated with only three philosophically progressive items.

K3: The goals of education should be dictated by children's interests and needs as well as by the demands of society.

K4: Right from the very first grade, teachers must teach the child at his own level and not at the level of the grade he is in.

K8: We should fit the curriculum to the child and not the child to the curriculum.

The learner-centered item L1 does not mention the term "students" and presents a general approach to different learning styles (Gardner, 1983) that would be applicable to any instructional practice. Learner-centered item L1, therefore, could be considered as more removed from the student activity-specific arena than some the other learner-centered items and due to this lack of student activity specificity, the L1 item would seem to be less likely to correlate highly with the K3, K4, and K8 items.

Learner-centered item L4

> Practices that encourage students to direct, understand, and take responsibility for their own learning.

Learner-centered item L4 has the second lowest number of correlations with the progressive philosophical items:

K3: The goals of education should be dictated by children's interests and needs as well as by the demands of society.

K8: We should fit the curriculum to the child and not the child to the curriculum.

K9: True discipline springs from interest, motivation, and involvement in live problems.

The term referring to students as taking "responsibility for their own learning" in L4 relates to these key terms in K3, K8 and K9: "goals of education should be dictated by children's interest," "fit the curriculum to the child," and students having "interest, motivation, and involvement in live problems," respectively. Students taking responsibility for their own learning incurs motivational influences and is more likely to occur when their interests are supported (Dewey, 1913). "Fitting the curriculum to the child" offers a motivational effect for students taking responsibility for their own learning because having their interests supported enhances motivation. Attempts to motivate students must include knowledge of the personal goals and interest of the student as well as relative value of the subject matter from the standpoint of the student (Wade et al., 1993). Students being interested, motivated and involved in live problems as a "means of true discipline" has intrinsic motivational implications also (Alexander & Murphy, 1994).

Learner Centered Item L2

In the present study, there were statistically significant correlational relationships between traditional and learner-centered items, but, with the exception of two philosophically traditional items relating to learner-centeredness, those correlations that have real meaning are those between philosophically progressive and learner-centered items. The learner-centered item correlating at .20 or above with the two philosophically traditional items is L2.

L2: Opportunities for students to achieve mastery on developmentally appropriate tasks.

The two philosophical traditional items are K1 and K2.

K1: Learning is essentially a process of increasing one's store of information about the various fields of knowledge.

K2: The curriculum consists of subject matter to be learned and skills to be acquired.

Both of these philosophically traditional items were curriculum and subject matter oriented and were the only two traditional items with this orientation. The L2 item was unique among the learner-centered items in that it was the only learner-centered item about developmentally appropriate tasks. The term "tasks" is often utilized in the field of curriculum (Erickson, 1982; Erickson & Shultz, 1981) and thereby provides the link to the two philosophically traditional items.

The L2 item also correlated with four philosophical progressive items

K3: The goals of education should be dictated by children's interests and needs, as well as by the demands of society.

K7: Learning experiences organized around life experiences rather than around subjects are desirable in the schools.

K8: We should fit the curriculum to the child and not the child to the curriculum.

K9: True discipline springs from interest, motivation, and involvement in live problems.

Learner-centered item L6

Strategies that encourage students to learn with and from each other, including across age and grade levels.

Learner-centered item L6 correlated significantly with four philosophically progressive items. The progressive items are listed below.

K3: The goals of education should be dictated by children's interests and needs, as well as by the demands of society.

K7: Learning experiences organized around life experiences rather than around subjects is desirable in the schools.

K8: We should fit the curriculum to the child and not the child to the curriculum.

K9: True discipline springs from interest, motivation, and involvement in live problems.

Those instructional strategies that encourage students to learn with and from each other contain an intrinsic motivational element (Alexander & Murphy, 1994) that is also present in each of the correlating philosophical items. The concept of leading out from students' interests including students' social interests (Wertsch, 1991) is salient in each of the philosophically progressive items. K3 includes "children's interests," K8 is concerned with fitting the "curriculum to the child," and K9 includes "involvement in live problems." All of these philosophically progressive terms can be interpreted to either emanate from or involve learning within the context of groups of students.

Learner-centered items L5 and L3

Instruction that is flexible and not bound to time schedules.

Practices that involve students in creating their own individual learning plans.

Learner-centered items L3 and L5 correlated with all of the five philosophically progressive items. The five philosophical items are listed below.

K3: The goals of education should be dictated by children's interests and needs, as well as by the demands of the society.

K4: Right from the very first grade, teachers must teach the child at his own level and not at the level of the grade he is in.

K7: Learning experiences organized around life experiences rather than around subjects is desirable in the schools.

K8: We should fit the curriculum to the child and not the child to the curriculum.

K9: True discipline springs from interest, motivation, and involvement in live problems.

A flexible approach to instruction and time lends itself to accommodating all of the above correlated philosophically progressive items.

If a single learner-centered item could be selected as being most representative of the concepts associated with learner-centered instruction, perhaps item L3 would most qualify because it provides for all of the concepts associated with the progressive philosophical items. The progressive philosophical item K7, which states that learning experiences are best organized around life experiences rather than around subjects, has a motivational implication in that life experiences are presumed to be the more inherently motivating. Schiefele et al. (1992) suggested that performance in students' more difficult subjects such as mathematics and physics was more affected by ability, whereas students' performance in the easier to learn subjects, such as biology and social studies, was more influenced by motivational factors. Subjects more associated with real world life experiences would, therefore, contain more inherent motivational factors.

Conclusions

Based upon the findings and subsequent discussion of the findings of the present study, the following conclusions can be drawn.

1. Based upon teacher responses in the present study, teachers have a general leaning towards learner-centered instruction, but have leanings towards both philosophical views of traditionalism and progressivism. This dual leaning is demonstrated in that a third of the traditional items were significantly correlated with learner-centered items. Teachers may have expressed traditional philosophical attitudes while espousing learner-centered attitudes because they feel ambivalent about both traditional and progressive views. Dewey (1902) held that a common sense consideration of opposite beliefs may explain this ambivalence in that "these oppositions are rarely

carried to their logical conclusions...Common sense vibrates back and forward in a maze of inconsistent compromise" (p. 10).

What may appear to be incongruencies may simply be an expression of moderation. The 1975 study by Ashton and his colleagues included a "moderate" category in the center of the traditional and progressive categories and 90% of the responding elementary teachers selected this category at the highest level of agreement. The present study did not include a "moderate" or middle category, but teachers' endorsing both philosophical views may be an expression of moderation. For instance, teachers may think in progressive philosophical terms, but when faced with students who have strong social needs for structure and who exhibit significant deficits in basic knowledge, opt for the more structured and teacher-centered traditional methods.

If the philosophical attitudes of progressivism and traditionalism are mediated by other factors (e.g.,Ehrlich, 1969; Rokeach, 1960), then inconsistent endorsements should be expected to ensue. Teachers may not have a uniform stance in regard to philosophical and learner-centered issues and, by implication, in regard to any school issue. Additionally, inconsistent philosophical endorsement may lend itself to lessening instructional efficacy (Clandinin, 1986). The current findings in this study were consistent with other studies in which teachers endorsed traditional and progressive beliefs simultaneously (Ashton, et al., 1975; Bennett, 1976; Goodlad, 1984; Sontag, 1968).

Another factor which must be considered in examining the inconsistency of results is any assumption that the effect of teaching styles is constant for all students. A review of studies (Clarkson, 1983) on the types of students making up the majority of urban classrooms indicates that the effect is not constant. Studies designed to merely assess the single question "Is teaching style A better than teaching style B?" could be masking interesting interactive effects because of the failure to differentiate types of students. A better question for studies would be that of "Do teaching styles interact with student characteristics to produce differential outcomes?" Still another question would consist of "Do differences in teaching style differentially affect the cognitive and

emotional development of students?" (Bennett, 1976). The implication of these latter two questions is that a teacher could be an excellent teacher utilizing either teacher-centered or learner-centered modes (Clarkson, 1983).

The global student has a need for a structured classroom setting combined with personal warmth from the teacher and teacher-centered instruction. The analytic student, needing self-paced time to think independently and to analyze highly-detailed information, would respond best to learner-centered instruction with its emphasis on student. Teachers could shift teaching modes within a single class period in an effort to accommodate the learning needs of students. Teachers endorsing both the traditional philosophy and learner-centered instruction in the present study may be indicative of their responding to different kinds of cognitive structures of their students. The results of this study indicate that a teacher may be innovative in some ways while traditional in others.

2. There is considerable heterogeneity about philosophical attitudes among schools. This may impact decision-making, planning, problem solving, and teacher morale. For instance, there may be problems in reaching consensus in any sort of joint activity. Success of either philosophical leaning could be a function of class size, for instance. Teachers faced with interacting with large numbers of disparate students on a daily basis may not consider themselves to be in a position to utilize learner-centered practices. They may tend towards task-oriented activities which are associated with philosophical traditionalism (Kerlinger & Pedhazur, 1968). Additionally, the factors of social norms and personal influences result in social controls (Albrecht, DeFleur & Warner, 1972; Corwin & Borman, 1988) and if norms and influences are not supportive of progressivism, teachers may adopt their teaching practice accordingly. Teachers may view how they are treated by higher authorities as parallel to how they treat their students. This parallel view may be the link between those administrative policies affecting teaching and the quality of the students' experience (Firestone, 1992).

Implications for Practice

Based on the review of literature and the findings of this study, the following suggestions for program development are recommended:

1. A study program for teacher philosophical and learner-centered instructional training, including philosophy of education, modes of instruction, and a personal understanding of educational philosophical views and how these views relate to instructional style is recommended. Teachers need to be allowed the opportunity to assess any differences between their own beliefs and practices. Development of such self assessment techniques could provide information not only immediately useful to teachers, but to the implementation of reform plans which involve radical shifts in the way teachers operate in the classroom.

The purpose of this program would be to help teachers develop the skills necessary for the implementation of successful student-centered learning environments. Knowledge of individual teachers' philosophical views could contribute to the decision-making process utilized in the formation of teaching teams (Goodlad, 1984). It is realistic to expect that some teachers would choose to remain teacher-centered, but would at least be aware of other instructional means.

2. A consideration in selecting new teachers would be their ability and willingness to interact with students on a learner-centered basis as well as demonstrate (1) persistence, (2) the ability to generalize between philosophical position and practice, (3) a personal as well as professional basis for wanting to teach, and (4) a deeply held belief that their development of a teaching practice will lead to student achievement (American Teacher, 1992). Due to lack of conclusive evidence of any linkage between student achievement, teachers' philosophical and instructional attitudes, it is recommended that teachers be assigned to any particular school according to philosophical views on a heterogenous basis.

3. School systems, in cooperation with student teacher practice programs with local colleges and universities, could administer the Kerlinger philosophical scale and the McREL learner-centered scale to teachers and student teachers in the program for the purpose of assigning

student teachers to compatible cooperating teachers. Goodlad (1984) suggested that knowing the life philosophy of both teachers and student teachers would serve as a partial basis for assignments. When teachers and student teachers share similar philosophical attitudes, they are more likely to form effective relationships (Wiley, 1972; Loadman & Mahan, 1987). Additionally, student teachers' self-awareness would be advanced by knowing their philosophical stance (Hill, 1974) and their degree of learner-centeredness (Mid-continent, 1994).

4. Previous research indicates that teachers' simultaneous endorsement of opposing philosophical views is sufficiently confounding to warrant further comparative studies utilizing the Kerlinger scale with other measures. In this study, the item analysis showed weak but significant correlations between progressive philosophical and learner-centered attitudes. On a school-by-school basis, however, the majority of teachers were philosophically traditional.

5. Though it is not yet thoroughly evident how ascertaining teachers' view of either progressivism or traditionalism contributes to the understanding of teachers' degree of learner-centeredness, there was enough evidence of a positive relationship between the philosophical and learner-centered items to focus on other variables which may be present, such as demographic variables. A study is recommended that investigates the relationships between the variables of this study (philosophical and learner-centered attitudes) and demographic variables and additional experiential variables. This study would include some qualitative research involving a structured interview format. This would provide a rich description of the nature of the relationships between the demographic variables and teachers' philosophical views and instructional attitudes. According to Cronbach (as cited in Shulman & Keisler, 1966) research of this nature should explore a five-fold interaction-subject matter, with type of instruction, with timing of instruction, with type of pupil, with outcome.

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Summary

Success in schools may well depend on teachers' philosophical views and attitudes toward instruction. Hart (1990) predicted that the "ultimate arbiters of educational reform" are students' knowledge, skills, and values as related to these views and attitudes. This study examined the philosophical and instructional attitudes of teachers in a limited number of schools. It is not possible to say that these identified attitudes help or hinder learning. However, if it is believed that these views and attitudes effect learning outcomes then future research programs may further examine this issue. Many school systems in the United States are plagued with poor student achievement and if there is a relationship between teachers' philosophical and instructional attitudes and student achievement, future research should deal with this relationship. It is important to identify which of the two philosophical views and what degree of agreement with learner-centered attitudes had the most positive effect on student achievement.

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Appendix A

10-ITEM BRIEF SCALE I FROM KERLINGER'S EDUCATION ATTITUDE SCALE VII

Directions: Please read each of the following statements. Then decide the extent to which you agree or disagree. Circle the number to the right of the question that best matches your choice. Go with your first judgement and do not spend much time mulling over any one statement. PLEASE ANSWER EVERY QUESTION.

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**
	Strongly Disagree	**Somewhat disagree**	**Somewhat agree**	**Strongly agree**

1.	Learning is essentially a process of increasing one's store of information about the various fields of knowledge.	1	2	3	4
2.	The curriculum consists of subject matter to be learned and skills to be acquired.	1	2	3	4
3.	The goals of education should be dictated by children's interests and needs, as well as by the demands of society.	1	2	3	4
4.	Right from the very first grade, teachers must teach the child at his own level and not at the level of the grade he is in.	1	2	3	4
5.	What is needed in the modern classroom is a revival of the authority of the teacher.	1	2	3	4
6.	Teachers should keep in mind that pupils have to be made to work.	1	2	3	4
7.	Learning experiences organized around life experiences rather than around subjects is desirable in the schools.	1	2	3	4
8.	We should fit the curriculum to the child and not the child to the curriculum.	1	2	3	4
9.	True discipline springs from interest, motivation, and involvement in live problems.	1	2	3	4
10.	One of the big difficulties with modern schools is that discipline is often sacrificed to the interests of children.	1	2	3	4

Items from Kerlinger's Educational Scale VII as identified by J. C. Bledsoe, Validity and reliability of two brief scales of educational attitudes, Perceptual and Motor Skills, April 15, 1976.

Appendix B

6 ITEM INSTRUCTION SUBSCALE FROM THE SCHOOL PRACTICES SURVEY

Directions: The purpose of this survey is to help you assess what you believe your school *should have* **(your value)** in terms of policies, procedures, assessment, etc. that are consistent with the learner-centered principles. For each item, please think about and respond, indicating the degree to which you agree with each item as an ideal or goal. Mark your responses using a No. 2 pencil. Answer according to the following scale.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Strongly Disagree	**Somewhat disagree**	**Somewhat agree**	**Strongly agree**

1.	Instructional practices - multiple ways of presenting information.	1	2	3	4
2.	Students achieve mastery on appropriate tasks.	1	2	3	4
3.	Students create their own individual learning plans.	1	2	3	4
4.	Students take responsibility for their own learning.	1	2	3	4
5.	Instruction not bound to time schedules.	1	2	3	4
6.	Students learn from each other, across age and grade levels.	1	2	3	4

This survey is based on the "Learner-Centered Psychological Principles" which were produced by the Presidential Task Force on Psychology in Education for the American Psychological Association and the Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL). The Principles address the comprehensive needs of the learner, including his or her metacognitive, cognitive, affective developmental, personal and social needs, as well as individual differences between learners. They are consistent with more than a century of research on teaching and learning and are widely shared and implicitly recognized in many excellent programs found in today's schools.

Table 1

Analysis of Variance Results - Philosophical Attitudes

Source	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Between Groups	9	132.14	14.68	1.50	.15
Within Groups	426	4172.60	9.79		
Total	435	4304.73			

Table 2

Analysis of Variance Results - Learner-Centeredness

Source	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Between Groups	9	2.39	.27	1.27	.25
Within Groups	426	89.07	.21		
Total	435	91.47			

Table 3

Item Analysis. Correlation of Items at $r = .20$ on the Kerlinger Philosophical and McREL Learner-Centered Instruments (n=431)

			L1	L2	L3	L4	L5	L6
Traditional	Learning - increasing information	K1		.20*				
Traditional	Curriculum - subject matter and skills	K2		.24*				
Progressive	Goals of education dictated by children's interests/ needs, demands of society	K3	.28*	.28*	.26*	.20*	.26*	.26*
Progressive	Teach the child at his own level	K4	.21*		.25*		.25*	
Traditional	Revival of the authority of the teacher is needed	K5						
Traditional	Pupils have to be made to work	K6						
Progressive	Learning organized around life experiences	K7		.24*	.29*		.27*	.27*
Progressive	Curriculum fitted to the child, not child to curriculum	K8	.25*	.27*	.29*	.28*	.29*	.27*
Progressive	True discipline springs from involvement in live problems	K9		.26*	.28*	.25*	.28*	.31*
Traditional	Discipline is often sacrificed to the interests of children	K10						

*$p = .01$